



Rockport Millbrook Meadow Committee

P.O. Box 51, Rockport, MA 01966

www.millbrookmeadow.org

*Charmaine Blanchard
Marcia Lombardo, Treasurer
Aileen Morrissey
Frederick H. Tarr III*

*Samuel W. Coulbourn, Chair
Shannon Mason, Vice Chair
Barbara Sparks
Stephanie Woolf*

Minutes of Meeting Wednesday, October 14th, 2015 Trustees' Room, Rockport Public Library

7:00 p.m. Chairman **Sam Coulbourn** called the meeting to order, announcing that, because of a late posting, this meeting will not be official, for information only, and no votes can be taken. Members present: **Barbara Sparks, Shannon Mason, Aileen Morrissey, Marcia Lombardo, Stephanie Woolf, and Ted Tarr**. Also present were **Gunilla Caulfield, Laura Hallowell, and Eric Hutchins**, Advisors to the RMMC. **Charmaine Blanchard** was absent.

1. Public input. None.

2. Committee Business

Treasurer's Report. Marcia reported that as of now we have \$1114.60 in our expense fund; \$148,512.62 in the Lura Hall Phillips Fund; and \$0.00 In the CPC fund.

Approval of Submitted Bills. Deferred until Nov. 18th meeting.

Approve Minutes of September 9th, 2015. Deferred until Nov. 18th meeting.

Open Meeting Law Review (re: Emails). Barbara reminded members that, in compliance with the Open Meeting Law, we may not conduct discussions on committee business with the membership via email. We should avoid replying to a message using "Reply All" when it may be construed as discussing committee business.

2. Update on the Status of Millbrook Meadow Restoration. Barbara reported that Milone & MacBroom (MMI) will submit the environmental notification form to Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) probably tomorrow. The concerns of the DPW Commissioners have been forwarded to MMI by Joe Parisi.

Eric reported that he took Andie Greene, MMI senior water resources engineer, on a tour of the Meadow today to visit the culvert, the headwall section and the Frog Pond.

Barbara reported that, in response to a question by DPW Commissioners, MMI has modified the dredging plan to ensure that the 8" clay sewer pipe that crosses the Mill Pond will not be disturbed. This means that the amount of material removed from the Pond will be reduced, resulting in slightly lower cost. Current estimate is still \$300,000, which includes moving dredged material offsite to a lined landfill.

Barbara reported that she had asked MMI about construction oversight, and Jason Williams of MMI advised her that we will need an outside consultant / contractor to perform construction administration/ inspection. MMI can perform this task and would likely see supervision taking place part time on a 1-2 days per week basis during the construction period.

Barbara also stated that the current contract with MMI will take us through permitting, to the final design.

MEPA Filing. Eric advised that in advance of the MEPA field visit it would be helpful to have positive letters from abutters to provide to MEPA.

Barbara noted that we have met with the traffic committee to discuss assignment of a handicap parking space on King Street to allow access to the Mill Pond. We will take part in a field trip to the Mill Pond access area on Thursday, Oct. 22nd at 12:30 p.m. and attend the meeting of the Traffic & Parking Committee at Town Hall afterward.

Discussion of possible financing plans Barbara reported that we will meet with the Capital Improvement Planning Committee on October 19th. She will check to determine if we will be allowed to make a presentation.

Barbara brought up our next meeting with the Community Preservation Committee. Eric suggested January, 2016, as we will probably be submitting an additional request for the 2017 round in February 2016.

Proposed Implementation Plan. Barbara reported that Frank Hassler, Advisor, had suggested that we prepare an implementation plan which states our intentions on conducting the restoration, including financing, and spell out just what tasks will be undertaken in the project. He suggests that this document should be discussed with town boards and committees and finally presented at Spring Town Meeting for approval by the voters. Shannon suggested that such a document's effectiveness is questionable. Stephanie said that "it can be torn apart", leading to more trouble at the point when we want the Town to concentrate on approving spending of Community Preservation Funds, and perhaps CIPC or other funds. Eric added: "You are not going to educate people at Town Meeting. Don't open yourself up!"

Since this is an information-only meeting, any voting on this measure was deferred.

Invasives treatment. Laura reported on the status of treatment of invasive species in the Meadow and around the Pond by Polatin.

Planting Plans. Laura said that she has been studying the plans prepared by MMI regarding planting in the Meadow and she had questions and comments:

a. Water outlets. Only two are planned. Need at least one outlet about every 100 feet. Members informally agreed that this looked rather sparse.

b. Do we want any shade trees in the Meadow and Mill Pond?

(1). According to the current (50%) plans, the trees right below the dam will be cut down because they are either ill or are Norway maples in poor shape; they will be replaced with Eastern redbuds, beautiful small trees that can reach 20-30ft. Would we prefer that MMI select trees which will become majestic shade trees?

(2). The red oak, now about 50 ft. tall between the swing set and the stone bridge, is slated for removal. Do we want this tree, the last shade tree in the area, to be protected?

(3). At Mill Pond, there are two majestic Norway maples that shade the current bench on the north side of the pond. It is not clear if they are to be removed or not. Proper maintenance of the ground beneath the trees could minimize their invasive impact. Do we want to preserve them?

(4). A red maple on the path near the Welcome parking lot is slated for removal. Could its health be improved so that it would become a great shade tree?

c. Mill Pond low wall area, 21, 23, and 25 King Street

(1). The current plan specifies the planting of 12 *Rhododendron maxima*. Giant rhodies would pretty much block the path.

(2). Space will be needed for preventive maintenance of invasive English ivy along the wall, since it is being grown by the abutters. It will have to be cut away annually.

(3). The current plan specifies a Canadian serviceberry right in front of the window of the guest house of #23 King St. It would be advisable to move that tree so that it would not interfere directly with that person's view of the pond.

(4). Six Heritage birch are planned right in front of #25 King St. to screen it. Possibly a smaller number of trees could be considered. This is also the area where the retaining wall has collapsed. Will we plan to rebuild the wall?

Members discussed this, and discussed the idea of hiring an arborist to help members understand the situation. Barbara said that MMI is under contract to deliver a design; the design is not completed, and it doesn't make sense to hire someone else at the same time.

Eric said that there is speculation that we will cut down most of the trees in the Meadow and residents will be left with a bare field. "We need to consider the political angle. People need to be happy!"

Shannon suggested that we insist upon a *balance* of shade vs. flowering trees, and that we consider letting some old trees stay up while their replacements grow to reasonable height.

Laura offered to show members the items discussed. Members informally agreed to meet at the Dam on Sunday at 2:30 for a walk.

DPW/Maintenance Plans. Laura suggested that we should consider convening a Maintenance Working Group to plan how the park will be maintained after the restoration. Members discussed this and informally agreed that a group which includes Rockport Garden Club, the Beautification Committee, as well as DPW Commissioners and DPW be convened to plan.

4. Meadow and Pond Use Request Policy and Procedure. Meadow and Pond Use Request and Policy was discussed briefly, and it was affirmed that a vote has not taken place on this matter.

5. Fundraising Sub-Committee, Publicity and Community Outreach.

Pam Fox Painting Raffle Harvest Festival Oct. 17. Shannon discussed preparations for this event and asked for more volunteers to fill slots from setup at 7:30 a.m. until closing at 5 p.m. Eric suggested that we offer six \$20 tickets for \$100 as an extra inducement. Marcia suggested that this would be a good idea for the final sale at the drawing on November 15th.

Members discussed how to make the Drawing at the Community House on Nov. 15th a festive event, with refreshments, etc. Shannon suggested that we should give Pam a gift in recognition of her contribution, and suggested a personalized mug. Others suggested a personalized apron or tote bag.

Sam suggested that we add a couple of items like Meadow tee-shirts to give as second and third prizes at the drawing.

Sam agreed to write a press release to publicize the event.

Blessing of the Animals Oct. 4th. Sam reported that Revs. Karin Wade and Derek Van Gulden officiated, blessing some 35 dogs, one pig and several stuffed animal toys.

6. New Business

Rockport Garden Club (RGC) Letter re plantings in Meadow. President Holly Yasaitis of the RGC has sent MMC a letter discussing the sad state of the vegetation between the Meadow and the Peg Leg Parking Lot. With removal of some of the invasive plant life the condition has become more obvious. She suggested that we engage an arborist to discuss this. Laura noted

that the MMI 50% plan for this area shows only two patches of tall grass. Barbara suggested that we should plan for a hedgerow here.

Members discussed this and informally agreed to look for outside advice. Barbara suggested we discuss funding an arborist. We will discuss this further at our November meeting.

Eel Count. Eric reported that the eel count for this year's run is now 601, and is about over.

8. Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 18th, 2015 at Trustees' Room, Rockport Public Library.

9. Informally adjourned 9:14 p.m.

Approved:

Samuel W. Coulbourn

Copy to: Town Administrator; Director of Public Works; Conservancy Board and Advisors; Conservation Agent; DPW Commissioners